

# THE CATHOLIC MIND

VOL. XXXIX

OCTOBER 22, 1941

No. 932

## Labor's Obligations to American Democracy

JOHN C. FRIEDL, S.J.

*Address delivered by the Director of the Institute for Social Reconstruction, Rockhurst College, Kansas City, Missouri, before the Omaha Central Union in Peony Park, Omaha, Nebraska, September 1, 1941.*

**W**E are uneasy about our foreign affairs and we are uneasy about our domestic affairs. Though with something of a sigh of relief Labor tells itself that it is now in the saddle it, too, is uneasy about its own future because it is uneasy about the very soul of our national existence, our democracy, on which its continued well-being so urgently depends.

The note of emergency about our foreign affairs is but a momentary distraction from those greater long-range problems of our internal national life which clamor for solution. Put off as we may the day of reckoning, come it will. Our only hope is that we will meet it intellectually, spiritually and psychologically prepared. It is this obligation of preparation for what is to come that I propose to discuss with you.

### ENTERING A NEW ERA

Before all else we must recognize that we are entering a new era. Things will never again be just as they

## 2 LABOR'S OBLIGATIONS TO AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

---

were. We are moving out of old conditions and old social and economic surroundings. I could cite hundreds of important men the world over who have said this very thing. But at the cross-roads of the world, at the world's listening post, there is ever an observer whose vision is not cramped by international boundaries, racial groups, economic interests and geographic hemispheres; one who surveys events as the world's most objective observer. We have the late Pope Pius XI to thank for this rapid and very concise analysis of the contemporary scene. "There is no denying," he said three years ago, "that the world has entered upon one of those transition periods, of unrest, of questioning, of disorientation and conflict which have been well described as turning points of history." Let us accept that as a fact, as simply and as categorically as he puts it there; and let Labor build its house accordingly.

Does that mean that we must hold with the radicals that our traditional American way of life is on the way out; that our social, economic and political democratic concepts must yield to some new form, say, of totalitarianism, whether of a class, or of so-called managers and economic coordinators, or of some one "strong" man speaking for an all-powerful state? Far from it!

We need to save the American way to the extent that it is worth saving. We want to save it as any alert business man would want to save a going concern, prepared to sacrifice whatever does not contribute to its well-being. We want to save our American Democracy not only from the threat of foreign domination but also from the danger of an internal break-up through lazy apathy and half-hearted concern over our domestic problems, and the jittery impulse that prompts so many unthinking people to grasp at any quack social formula that promises a general panacea.

## LABOR MUST PREPARE INTELLECTUALLY

Our problem is to restore human affairs in this country to a satisfactory state without sacrificing the essential framework of our democracy. To save what is good in our present economy of democratic enterprise based on a legitimate profit motive and the natural right of private ownership, we must first get to know and recognize entwining abuses, and then steel ourselves to be willing ruthlessly to cut these abuses away.

What is basically good in this going concern of ours must be thoughtfully and conscientiously preserved in the face of muddled, subversive or revolutionary thinking. This takes study; and study takes time and sacrifice. Here, precisely, is where the obligation to prepare ourselves intellectually for our new era falls squarely on the employer and employe, on management, white collar worker or wage earner, on industry, commerce and agriculture. But were you to ask me on what one group falls the greatest responsibility, I would put my finger on him who works for a living in city, town or village, because he is by far the most numerous, because the men and women, the sons and daughters, of Labor, have, up to this point, been the solid backbone of our traditional American democracy.

Long before we could speak of mass industrial production which, in this last generation, has given to our people the highest standard of living the world over, there existed substantially what we must recognize as the American way of life. There were cities and states, institutions and schools, churches and clubs, good times and bad times, work and play, war and peace, culture and ignorance. And it was the men and women of Labor who made our cities and serviced them, built our churches and staffed them with priests and ministers taken from among their sons, popu-

larized education and endowed it with tax or private support, went to the polls and gave us decade upon decade of sane, conservative government, declared war and filled the ranks of our armies, built our ships and sailed them in war and peace.

Life was more simple in the past, it is true. It was not the tremendously complex thing we know today. But fundamentally the American Idea, based on the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, has not changed—unless we are willing to admit that a revolution has taken place without our knowledge and consent, a thing theoretically impossible under our Constitution.

#### EXPANSION OF LABOR

It is natural, too, that with the years Labor itself should have grown more complex and risen correspondingly in importance and prestige. Labor itself has, in fact, become a big business and laid itself open to all the mistakes that Big Business can make. Not the least is the risk it likewise runs of having the thousands who hold an equity in its future shrug off lightly any ultimate responsibility, leaving the thinking and deciding to an overlordship of paid managers and absentee directors.

If the great evil of Big Business today is the dissociation of ownership and management, Labor can make the same mistake by permitting the great organized rank and file to fall into a "Let George do it" mentality, by cutting the democratic life-line between organization and leadership. So delicately poised is our national economic system, of which Labor is now more than ever a vital part, that a disturbance produced at one point is transmitted to countless other points.

Ours is now a nation-wide economy, not a local one. The men and women of Labor must now be will-

ing to learn the new technique of this expansion. And it has to be willing to go to school again to learn these techniques and acquire a safe framework for its social, economic and political thinking.

Whereas on Labor's leadership much depends, much more depends on its rack and file. It is an open secret that a local union usually gets only the leadership which it deserves. And if we insist that trade unionism is good for democracy, that it is social and economic democracy in action, then if there is any democratic value in ten million trade unionists standing shoulder to shoulder it is only to the extent that they (1) drop their lazy apathy in things which concern their own local first of all, (2) measure carefully the national repercussions to any local action they may take, (3) seek the greater good of the greater number in the whole house of Labor, rather in the whole house of Democracy, which is substantially the same thing.

Need I say that this requires intelligent thought and planning? That is why a greater responsibility rests on those who are supposed democratically to elect and instruct their official spokesmen in the very field round which their daily lives revolve, namely, their job. Those who pay their union dues cannot let obligations stop there. It was a sad commentary on the low ebb of dynamic unionism among the rank and file when local upon local had to inaugurate a system of fines in order to get the membership to attend what might well be Labor's own Town Hall Meeting.

#### OBLIGATION TO PREPARE FOR NEW ERA

Why does Labor need to re-educate itself up to the times? You know enough about the new need for refresher courses to bring your outmoded skills up to date. There is as much need and more to think about refresher courses in some appropriate academic

larized education and endowed it with tax or private support, went to the polls and gave us decade upon decade of sane, conservative government, declared war and filled the ranks of our armies, built our ships and sailed them in war and peace.

Life was more simple in the past, it is true. It was not the tremendously complex thing we know today. But fundamentally the American Idea, based on the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, has not changed—unless we are willing to admit that a revolution has taken place without our knowledge and consent, a thing theoretically impossible under our Constitution.

#### EXPANSION OF LABOR

It is natural, too, that with the years Labor itself should have grown more complex and risen correspondingly in importance and prestige. Labor itself has, in fact, become a big business and laid itself open to all the mistakes that Big Business can make. Not the least is the risk it likewise runs of having the thousands who hold an equity in its future shrug off lightly any ultimate responsibility, leaving the thinking and deciding to an overlordship of paid managers and absentee directors.

If the great evil of Big Business today is the dissociation of ownership and management, Labor can make the same mistake by permitting the great organized rank and file to fall into a "Let George do it" mentality, by cutting the democratic life-line between organization and leadership. So delicately poised is our national economic system, of which Labor is now more than ever a vital part, that a disturbance produced at one point is transmitted to countless other points.

Ours is now a nation-wide economy, not a local one. The men and women of Labor must now be will-

ing to learn the new technique of this expansion. And it has to be willing to go to school again to learn these techniques and acquire a safe framework for its social, economic and political thinking.

Whereas on Labor's leadership much depends, much more depends on its rank and file. It is an open secret that a local union usually gets only the leadership which it deserves. And if we insist that trade unionism is good for democracy, that it is social and economic democracy in action, then if there is any democratic value in ten million trade unionists standing shoulder to shoulder it is only to the extent that they (1) drop their lazy apathy in things which concern their own local first of all, (2) measure carefully the national repercussions to any local action they may take, (3) seek the greater good of the greater number in the whole house of Labor, rather in the whole house of Democracy, which is substantially the same thing.

Need I say that this requires intelligent thought and planning? That is why a greater responsibility rests on those who are supposed democratically to elect and instruct their official spokesmen in the very field round which their daily lives revolve, namely, their job. Those who pay their union dues cannot let obligations stop there. It was a sad commentary on the low ebb of dynamic unionism among the rank and file when local upon local had to inaugurate a system of fines in order to get the membership to attend what might well be Labor's own Town Hall Meeting.

#### OBLIGATION TO PREPARE FOR NEW ERA

Why does Labor need to re-educate itself up to the times? You know enough about the new need for refresher courses to bring your outmoded skills up to date. There is as much need and more to think about refresher courses in some appropriate academic

subjects. I presume that the principal reason for the invitation I received to address you was simply to tell you about some of this academic work for Labor that we are doing in Kansas City. But before I do this as briefly as I can, let me add a few more reasons why you, the individual, cannot afford to shrug off this present all-important obligation to prepare yourself for the world of tomorrow. You feel secure now, as though things will ever continue thus; it takes only one stroke of the pen of some "strong" man to change this economy overnight!

Today Labor must sit down at the conference table and match wits and sagacity with the paid representative of its employers and with the spokesmen of its government. The old hit-and-miss agreements and brass knuckle decisions presumably are on their way out. The day of the heavy-handed business representative or bullying labor lawyer—old dogs who just won't learn new tricks—is over. The call is for a new type of leadership, highly intelligent, far sighted and adept in the new approach to settling disputes and carrying on the legitimate business of the brotherhood. The presumption is that these will be younger men, though not necessarily so.

Many of the older leaders have gotten into a rut, or have entrenched themselves in self-perpetuating dynasties which have made truly democratic elections in the unions a farce. Many a local union, too, has sacrificed efficiency in the conduct of its official business and in the formulation of its policies by regarding many of its offices as good pastures in which to "farm out" its deserving old men. Don't misunderstand me! There is always room for fraternal charity among you, but where there is question of the good of the whole group I would much rather see you vote some of them an outright pension, than penalize yourselves by routine-like and inefficient administration.

If, then, that leadership is to be new and younger,



you, down there in the ranks, are eligible and you must make yourself eligible, for the voice of the future must be the real voice of American labor, intelligent, and trained to be guided by the demands of the common good of all.

### LABOR LOSING CONFIDENCE OF PUBLIC

If Labor has grown in importance and prestige today it also finds itself more often on the front pages of our newspapers. Although most of us can understand the sudden spotlighting of all and sundry labor disturbances and the super-diligence in reporting isolated instances of short-sighted, selfish or dishonest policy, yet we would be blind and deaf were we not to realize that quite generally organized labor is losing the sympathetic confidence of the public. Because all of organized labor is blamed for the unthinking acts of one or a few, new notions of public relations must be learned and put into effect. And that takes study and demands time.

Labor has a sales promotion problem too, right on its own doorstep. There is now generally conceded the undeniable right to organize into appropriate groups and bargain collectively. Up to the present, however, speaking in round numbers, only 10,000,000 of the 50,000,000 agricultural and non-agricultural people who work for a living have seen fit to avail themselves of this right.

The house of Labor itself is divided against itself. It must be conceded that for seventy years it was the organized voice of labor undoubtedly that helped to raise the work and wage standards of all who work for a living. The union man, knowing this, is inclined to be impatient and vindictive with those two out of every three city workers who ride the union horse without paying for any of the oats. No worthwhile converts to the cause are even won by bullying or vin-

dictive tactics. Labor must educate itself on how to educate its own separated brothers.

True it is that much social legislation of benefit to the mass of labor has been added to our statute books in the last decade, but I fear much of it because the wage earner himself has not kept up with it. There have been too many undemocratic short-cuts to the attainment of material objectives without corresponding understanding on the part of the rank and file. If this whole thing is not to blow up in one gigantic muddle, the men and women of labor must be willing to go back to school again and put substance behind its temporary gains. There is much to be learned; some means must be found to afford the wage-earner a better opportunity for academic self-improvement.

Many isolated attempts have been made along this line. There have been many noble and enthusiastic beginnings but, for the most part, short-lived. In Kansas City we believe that the best way to obviate useless fly-by-night and haphazard attempts at workers' education is to give it the benefit of what might be called "institutional stability." That means, to bring into the picture the experience, man power and administrative methods of an established educational institution.

#### INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

Three years ago Rockhurst College, prompted by the conviction that an educational institution can and should be a guiding force within its own community, founded the Institute for Social Reconstruction. Its aim: to present and defend the American Idea, rooted in the Christian principles of the Constitution, particularly as these principles apply to the events, problems and controversies of modern living especially in the fields of industry, the relationships of business and labor, as well as rural rehabilitation.

Behind all social, economic, cultural and political thinking there is a philosophy and a religion of some kind. The Institute is founded on a definite social philosophy and morality, a social doctrine which has a basic framework of principles laid down by conservative long-range thinkers of recent times, principles and recommendations formulated by Leo XIII, and adapted to the American scene, and corroborated wholly or in part by various groups representing industry, business, labor and agriculture.

The progress made thus far by the Institute has been most promising. Whereas the complete program is far from its hoped for attainment, due to circumstances particularly of a financial nature, yet up to the present it is already operating within three major divisions: (1) Undergraduate, (2) Adult "after-training," (3) Service. Let us skip the first as not particularly pertinent to this group.

As for "adult after-training," the possibilities of an educational program among adults has already been amply demonstrated in three fields:

(a) *Forum for the Clergy*: Offering an opportunity for the clergy to study, discuss and familiarize themselves with the various phases of the Social Problem, and to seek out the theological and philosophical implications in the social doctrine of the Church.

(b) *Labor School*: Recognizing that Labor, both organized and unorganized, industrial as well as agricultural, possibly holds the key to the future social order, and that organized labor has become the special hunting ground of subversive groups, the Institute offers a curriculum of academic and semi-academic studies whose aim is to revivify and strengthen, by study and discussion, the traditional conservatism of the secure wage-earner. It seeks to enable Labor to meet the threat of impending change intelligently, to teach justice through knowledge, to get it to think, to learn and to do in the Christian way. For two years

## 10 LABOR'S OBLIGATIONS TO AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

---

now the rank and file of Labor have taxed the limited capacity of this school.

(c) *Conferences for Employers*: Since it became increasingly evident that only one-half of the job is done in the industrial field if similar efforts are not directed at the employers of labor, last year a third section was added under the above title. A series of conferences, designed especially for employers, presented the general framework of a Christian philosophy of human effort and relations in industry and commerce.

*Service*: In the field of special service the Institute has frequently assisted in the arbitration of grievances between management and unions. An advisory and consultative service has been inaugurated. Believing, too, in an enlightened public relations policy as a basis for the conference type of approach to the solution of problems in employer-employee relationships, the Institute made itself jointly responsible, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Leo XIII's great social pronouncement *On the Condition of Labor*, for a very successful national symposium which brought together over a score of speakers of national reputation, representing all segments of our national living. The response of the citizens of Kansas City to this unique effort was most encouraging.

### CRITICAL TIMES FOR LABOR

In what I have said, I hope that I will not be misunderstood, and I appeal to you that my words might be received in the spirit in which they have been uttered, namely, for the good of the men and women of Labor in whose hands, it is my conviction, rests the future of our country.

There is no need for me to remind you that these are critical times, not only for the American Idea and our existence as a free people, but also critical times

for Labor, especially organized Labor. The small employer, caught between Big Business and the nationwide bargaining of some of the larger crafts, and faced with extinction in the relentless war game of defense priorities; the white collar worker, envying the wages, hours and conditions of labor, especially defense labor; people without vision, without insight, jittery and uncertain people, Cassandra and prophets of evil, these see nothing but the end of things in this country unless some "strong" man comes along to silence and hog-tie one of the parties to what they choose to call the labor combat. It is not hard to guess the identity of that party. It lives on the wrong side of the tracks.

Disheartening days lie ahead. In our history as a nation a war boom has always been the prelude to a seemingly inevitable crash. Must we face it again? With millions in the camps demobilized, the war industries in collapse, the nation staggering under an immense debt, the non-defense industries unable to take up the slack of unemployment, what then? Certainly now is the time for some long range thinking on your part, because the future so intimately concerns you as an individual, let alone as a provider for dependents.

Need we resign ourselves to the all too common assumption there must always be an unsolvable unemployment problem, constantly recurring crises, and the deadening fear that millions among us can never hope to be the complete human beings we were designed to be by our Creator, millions who can never for want of honest labor attain the ordinary completions of the Good Life: food, home, clothing, medical care, security for old age? Can Labor help with this problem in the spirit of citizens still free, or will it just drift into the position of being but voiceless wards of the State?

Now there is not one of us here who would not rise to the defense of the ideals behind craft unionism. But sometimes an uneducated hit and miss defense does

## 12 LABOR'S OBLIGATIONS TO AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

---

more harm than good. Labor unions must learn to broaden their vision and extend their program of action. "We shall never solve the problem of industrial peace, justice and good social order until labor unions assume a larger share of the responsibility for the welfare of the total community."

Far from being a subversive influence, union organization can be the strong bulwark of the democracy which today we are being called upon to defend with our best efforts, with our experience and, if need be, with our lives. There is a call for every ounce of our patriotism. It is unlikely that the bulk of you here before me will be called to the camps for active service, but does that absolve you from giving your best in the one way that you can give it?

This is not a time to make empty gestures and merely talk American democracy. As never before, we are called upon to practise it in the only way that is here and now practical for us; not by letting George do it, not by making fancy speeches, or by being satisfied to have your international officers pledge your craft to the defense of our country. You have to begin right here, in your every day living which revolves around your job and the craft you engage in, and more particularly right in your own local union which is supposed to be the democratic expression of the one common interest which unites you into a fraternal group rooted in justice and charity.

\* \* \*

**RECIPE FOR LIFE.**—Take equal parts of faith and courage, mix well with a sense of humor, sprinkle with a few tears, and add a helping of kindness to others.

Bake in a good natured oven and dust with laughter.

Scrape away any self indulgence that is apparent, and serve in generous helpings. *Holy Roodlets.*

## Teaching Religion in the Home

RT. REV. MSGR. WILLIAM T. DILLON

*Reprinted from THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL JOURNAL, September, 1941.*

**F**EW are yet convinced that religion should be taught to those of pre-school years. The reasoning is as simple as it is absurd. Children cannot commit sin until they are six years old (the arbitrary age of reason). Since they cannot commit sin they should not be taught religion. I need not say that I do not see the logic. In very fact I do see there is no sequitur and there are some pretty vicious innuendoes as well as some flaming fallacies express and implicit here.

I shall devote a part of my time to offering some suggestion for the guidance of those who teach children not yet accomplished in reason. I address myself primarily to the business of establishing the necessity of teaching religion to such children.

I suppose we may begin with the observation that while fitfully there is an attempt at teaching infants it is haphazard and nonpurposive. In homes that breathe the very atmosphere of Christ the attempt may be almost adequate but not all homes are of this type. It is conceivable that more harm than good can come of these fitful lessons that have no psychological origin and no pedagogic end. They will engender fears or misinterpretations that may cast their shadows across the world for all time to be.

### THEY TEACH EVERYTHING ELSE

You teach physical habits and successfully. You foster emotional control and with some achievement you train perception, imagination, and memory. You lay the ground for moral living. You inculcate skills that are sometimes involved. You stress the aesthetic by way of remote control. You are at last becoming

aware of the necessity of socialization but religion is and remains a thing to be taught by the cleric and religious.

You probably even save your face covertly by pleading the virtue of humility insisting that you do not know enough to teach religion. Clearly the same clergy and religious are not teaching your children (pretty evidently it would be hard for them to do so in our present pedagogic set-up). Clearly the child will not receive any religious education since there is no other string to the bow or horn to the dilemma.

Naturally the question presents itself: Since all this is true, is it necessary that religion be taught before reason dawns? And the answer is an unqualified affirmative. Because the child cannot make a moral choice until he is able to use reason is not evidence that he is religiously inept. In so far as such knowledge requires reason, he cannot be taught, but our religious life is a splendid congery of all the psychic elements that make a man. To ignore any of them is less than virtue and worse than fault.

The life of rational knowledge begins in sensation and continues through perception, imagination, and memory. The emotional gamut is necessary for the sentimental existence that is man's glory in the area of feeling and the culture of the physical and psychophysical activities of man in the conative order are fundamental to the exercise of free will. This is true in every area of consciousness whatever the pole or objective. Why should it be false in religion alone? Nor is it.

#### LAY A FOUNDATION

The sentiment of religion (and it is that) can no more stand without its emotional anchorage than the social life can be developed by a born anchorite. The high plateau of theological thought will be more easily



scaled if the factual basis therefor has been placed in early years. We may even believe that there will be some relation between ultimate efficiency and the date of the inauguration of our religious program.

We have no right to assume that our teaching in the years before the seventh will be void or vacant. Experimentally it can be established that this training is as achieving as that on any other age level—in fact more so than at most levels. You may use as meter stick any test you wish.

One other thought. It seems to me a dreadful waste that we should obdurately refuse to garner the lovely flowering of life's young spring because until now no one has done it. If everything different had always been considered a good cause for condemnation, man would still be in some very ancient state of civilization. This is not our only crime against childhood but it is a grave one.

If we can teach children nursery jingles we can teach them prayers as well and I don't mean involved prayers. I don't mean anything even as difficult as the Angelic Salutation, but I do mean that we can and should teach prayers of adoration and praise and could thus make true prayer a habit rather than an endeavor at a contract with the Almighty. If we can overstimulate them as we do with fairy tales as pointless as they are impossible, we can people their image-making faculty with the stories of Christ and of His saints. These, of course, will be edited and scaled down to meet our needs. If you can use dramatic ability in the interest of the skills why not in that of the great art of living with God?

Succinctly told, my thesis is that since a child is from its birth religious, from its birth it should be taught religion. Perhaps the one of whom I tell you knew nothing concerning pedagogy but she was a born teacher for all of that. Having prepared her infant for its day by a bath and all the routine involved,

and having dressed him to put him out into the sun, she took his pudgy little hand and traced across his forehead and his heart the sign of the cross. Priest though I was I stood in awe and admiration. I had never heard of such a thing before, but its vision shall not soon be forgotten.

### THIS IS MY THEORY

#### a) *Cognitive*

Anything that can be apprehended by a child is fit subject matter for teaching. Anything that can become the property of his memory is valid material. It is presumed that the adult will cull and differentiate. The Old Testament as well as the New should be screened and tested. The history of the Church and the lives of its blessed ones are splendid background.

The ceremonies of the ritual, the things in use should become familiar objects. If you can teach your baby colors, you can *a fortiori* teach him the colors of the vestments. If you can teach him the identity of things, why not include therein those that are sacred to his creed. If he can recognize Jack the Giant-Killer or Humpty-Dumpty why not Peter or John the Baptist? It is simple is it not? Right here I want to meet the objection that you will stricture him in the future by limiting him now. That is just what you are not doing. You are broadening his scope, not narrowing. You are lifting the horizon, not reducing.

#### b) *Emotion*

This is a dangerous spot and likely to prove a shoal if you are not careful, for the emotions are prone to take the lead, especially in those so young. The greater reason you should seek to direct them fittingly. So soon may you show the beauty of the world, its skies, its stars, its flowers, and grasses. So soon may you teach a sane affection rather than a stupid disorder.

So soon can you lift their eyes above the dull plane unto the mountain where the sun scarcely sets and the night is enshrouded in mystic loveliness. You may begin the practices of unselfishness that are the very heart of true godliness.

*c) Action*

This is the most fertile of all the fields of child culture. In our practice we bring the children into the sanctuary for Benediction and for Mass allowing them to stand and watch what there transpires and never once (be it said in passing) has even a two-year-old caused distraction to priest or people. On the contrary they have proved so edifying that strong men have wept to see them and women have been awe struck.

When in our chapel, now a thing of memory alone, we gathered at Vespers to say the Stations of the Cross the very evening grew more mystical to hear a child of five speak to our Lady in the Fourth Station and tell her that he will take care of her now that Jesus can no longer do so and the Crucifixion on Calvary's dark height could hardly pall the solemnity of the scene as the group of babies knelt before the dying Christ and tried to find some means to help Him.

Then as fell the chant of the lapping waters upon the senses there rose the shrill cadence of baby hymns. Some of them sat for sheer exhaustion after long hours of play but no one complained of that. We somehow felt that Christ did not. Why then should we? Those nights are still refulgent memories for priest and people. They may be forgotten by the children but they will never be unfelt. How could they be since Christ Himself was there with them as surely as He ever was in Perea or Samaria.

*d) Method*

As there is no whit of content that must not be taken as long as it is proportioned to their capacity

to accept it, so no technique of teaching should be discarded. Pictures and charts, songs, dramatizations, field excursions—projects—all are grist to the mill of him who teaches with the zeal of Christ about him. I would that I might illustrate each one but I must be content to indicate. I still cherish the memory of the construction of the Tabernacle of the Exodus with its Holy of Holies and its Altar of the Holocaust, its brazen laver, and its walls of skins. I remember the decalogue carved on two castoff pieces of slab concrete. At least that class will know that there were three commandments on one tablet, not five as they guessed.

There is no end to this. I could go on tiring but untired until the night would fail. I have tried many things during my priestly life. In all I have been uniformly unsuccessful. Most of them I have loved. For compensation I have found my labor with the outcasts in the contagious-disease hospital most satisfying. For concrete results I treasure my work of teaching, but for sheer grandeur and breath-taking appeal I shall always be glad for my privilege of having brought Christ to the babies of my island parish. It is something that time does not tarnish or death decay. There are many instances I might offer in evidence. I could tell you how Billy Law remembered my version of the story of Jacob and Esau nearly ten years after, how a little girl—a pixie if ever there was one—recalled that she used to insist upon my holding her while I taught the others and she remembered what I taught them. One story for stark sublimity I may not conceal. It is of the first altar boy I taught and when I asked my class to tell me what they loved best in all the world he said: "I love the Host." He hardly knew what it was.

Years passed and he went away to school. There in his senior year he fell a victim to infantile paralysis. Some weeks after, his father, who was half Arab, came to visit me. He began by explaining that, though

he wanted to come before, he had been a little resentful that John's last word had been for me. He continued: "I do not know just what he meant but he asked me to tell you that he went to see the Host."

He did not live to receive his diploma, but on the first page of the Year Book you may yet see his picture and beneath it his name and the notation:

*In absentia*

*Cum laude*

For all I know they may have added *honoris causa*. They might have for he had found the Host.

## Social Values of Catholicism

P. COFFEY, S.J.

*Reprinted from THE IRISH ROSARY, April, 1941.*

IN a Europe which to a large extent today has lost the Catholic Faith, it is well that he should assess the values that are in danger of being lost in that passing, for these belong not alone to the religious, but also to the social scale. Therefore, while we live in a period fraught with dangers for the present, but nevertheless distinct with possibilities for the future, we may consider it worth while to try to recover for ourselves, what in the past has been rejected.

What are some of these values? The most obvious in human life is the simplicity and contentment of a Christian home, its trials lightened by mutual self-sacrifice and love. Here in the early decisive years of the children, is given that guidance, care and direction, to fit them for after life. Here, too, married life reaps its reward in the happy laughter of children, guarded by devoted love. Fear does not come that the home may be broken, and that the father and mother they have known and are attached to will depart to look for other partners. Religion, and the spirit of sacrifice born of it are security against disruption. Many of the tender associations, most intimate con-

fidences, and sacred memories of adult life belong to the home life of childhood and youth. Most modern marriages, cut adrift from religious significance, split on the rock of selfishness, because the spirit of self-sacrifice, essential for happiness, is wanting. Only some higher motive can supply this.

What values can Catholicism truly lived bring in commercial life? Viewed merely from the natural plane, what benefits would not follow from restoring the almost forgotten virtues of honesty and mutual trust. If men determined to fulfil the obligations of justice and charity, should we not end the single-minded rush for profits at the cost of unjust wages, and unjust conditions. Likewise, how much would business men in the same trade not gain by mutual observation of each other's legitimate claims. How many benefits would follow socially and economically from unions of employers and employes in the same trade, mutually collaborating to produce their goods, to diminish unemployment, and serve the general interests of society. Here we have a basis from which can flow a fellow-feeling, a mutual helpfulness, and rational production instead of a harsh and bitter competition. Here also men may at last consent to sacrifice economic efficiency as the sole criterion of life, to the social welfare of the whole community.

We can but touch briefly on the Catholic Church's defense of personal freedom and rights against the undue intervention of the State. She has ever upheld the right of parents to religious education for their children, the right of the worker to organize, the right to private property, but also its right use. Her teaching in these matters is shown clearly and fully in the Encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI.

But the Catholic Church has also other social values to offer, for it breeds devotion to duty—courage, self-sacrifice, devotion to the service of others. Her work through the centuries for science and learning is the

life-blood of European civilization. Her labors in hospitals, orphanages, schools for the poor, homes for the aged and destitute, and in leper settlements, give testimony of her social service to mankind. She does not merely help the individual to obtain eternal salvation in the next life, but strives to give him a measure of comfort and welfare in this. Her work among men does not consist in the giving, merely, of money or help, but in reaching out to them that spiritual or temporal aid inspired by that charity of which Christ spoke when he said: "As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren, you did it to Me." Only thus and not by the hope of temporal gain, can we explain the life and death of those martyrs of charity, of which the Catholic Church possesses so many in her history.

We should ask ourselves whether a life giving expression to such values is of greater value even on the natural plane of human happiness and welfare, to the almost purely material, and pleasure seeking civilization of our day. But we cannot divorce the natural from the supernatural plane, if we wish to enjoy such benefits. For, strange though it may seem, to a more widespread material welfare, the great obstacle today is the absence of religious motive. For when men are freed from the bonds of religion, they will pursue their own private or class interests, regardless of the rights of others, or the general well being.

Greed and self-interest are potent forces in human nature, unless restrained by some stronger element. This can only come from a religious outlook, that looks to the ultimate end of life, the service of God, by the due regulation of our lives here, in accordance with His laws, and thus save our souls. On this foundation the doctrines and teachings of the Catholic Church stand. For if we acknowledge that we are conscious of a law within us, urging us to do good, and to avoid what is evil, then we are forced to admit that there is a Being, Who will reward and punish us accord-

ingly in some other life; for moral good, by experience, does not always get rewarded here, nor is evil always punished.

Given, therefore, some purpose in our lives, it is reasonable to suppose that He must have revealed sometime how we could fulfil that purpose. In other words, He must have left some organized teaching, or rule of life under some authoritative guide. For an institution, society, or organization, demands someone to direct and control it. That He did this, namely, founded a Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and appointed the Apostle Peter to be its Head, may be proved conclusively from Scripture and Tradition.

That authoritative guide and head rests in the Papacy, today in the Person of Pius XII, who, as historical evidence shows, rules in direct and unbroken line of succession from Saint Peter. Such a continuity of government, without parallel in human history, is proof alone of Her Divinity, and evoked from Luther himself, the protagonist of Protestantism, the confession, "the preservation of God's word among men, and the maintenance of Our Lord Christ's Kingdom in the Papacy, is the greatest of all the miracles which God has wrought."

The profession of the Catholic Faith involves certain renunciations, but promises much more in return not only in the life beyond the grave, but in the present.

For within the limits of the Ten Commandments and the Precepts of the Church, there are wide liberties for the flights of the human spirit. Here, artist and craftsman, musician and painter, architect and author, poet and peasant, can give full expression to the loftiest dreams. For all that is greatest in culture and most sublime in human achievement, from Caedmon to Shakespeare, from Cimabue to Michael Angelo, from Byrd to Beethoven, has flowered from Catholic soil. The Ten Commandments do not restrict my liberty and rights, but guard them.



Today in other countries immense sacrifices have been made in the prosecution of the war, surrender of personal wishes, of individual needs, of career, of home, of material possessions. All this when inspired by love of country, and the virtue of patriotism, commands admiration. Yet, who, when he deeply reflects, cannot but regret that for a more sublime good, the laws of God, peace of soul, and eternal happiness man has not been willing to give up much less. Men and women have not yet lost courage to make sacrifices, but in the pagan atmosphere of our time, religion as a motive has been forced into the background with disasters following all round.

What of the future? Christianity alone can overcome that excessive solicitude for earthly things, the inordinate desire for wealth, which is the blight of our age. Some words of Pope Pius XI are a fitting conclusion: "If we examine matters diligently and thoroughly, we shall perceive clearly that this longed-for social reconstruction must be preceded by a profound renewal of the Christian spirit, from which multitudes engaged in industry in every country have unhappily departed. Otherwise all our efforts will be futile, and our social edifice will be built, not upon a rock, but upon shifting sand." It is a re-echo of the warning of Pope Leo XIII: "Religion alone can destroy the evil at its root, all men must be persuaded that the primary thing needful is a return to real Christianity, in the absence of which all the plans and devices of the wisest will be of little avail."

\* \* \*

PHILANTHROPY v. CHARITY.—Philanthropy is a vain woman who loves to deck herself out in good works, and admire herself in the glass; whereas Charity is a mother whose eyes rest lovingly on the child at her breast, who has no thought of self, but who forgets her own beauty in her love. *Holy Roodlets.*

## Godparents Have Serious Obligations

THE necessity of godparents or sponsors is closely connected with the question of infant Baptism. The objection of Baptists to the practice arises from the common Protestant belief that the Christian Sacraments, if they are of any use at all, depend for their efficacy on the faith of the recipient—a position radically opposed to the Catholic doctrine that the Sacraments cause Grace of themselves as instruments in the hand of God, or, to use the well-known theological expression, they cause Grace *ex opere operato*. “Just as children in their mother’s womb receive nourishment not of themselves but through their parent, so also children who have not yet attained the use of reason receive salvation not of themselves but through Mother Church, in whose womb they are. In a similar manner they answer the questions put to them not of themselves but through others.”

The Church has always regarded the office of sponsor as a most sacred thing. “As everyone after he has been ushered into light requires a nurse and instructor, by whose aid and assistance he may be brought up and instructed in learning and useful knowledge, so also it is necessary that those who, by the waters of baptism, begin to live a spiritual life be consigned to the fidelity and prudence of someone from whom they may imbibe the precepts of the Christian religion, and by whom they may be trained in every manner of piety: and thus gradually grow up in Christ until, with the Lord’s help, they at length arrive at perfect manhood.” So sacred is this spiritual relationship between the child and the sponsor that it constitutes a diriment impediment to matrimony, which, since the new Codex, is

restricted to the minister and the child and the godparent and the child.

From the nature of the case certain qualities are required in one who undertakes the office of sponsor. In the very first place the Church will not tolerate the modern practice, which is nowadays becoming very common, of calling attention to the social importance of some particular baby by invoking the patronage of a multitude of godmothers and godfathers. It may be done with a view to the child's financial interests in years to come or to conciliate a number of relatives, but the fact remains that in the law of the Church there may be at the very most one godmother and one godfather. The reason is to prevent the multiplication of spiritual relationships that would arise, and still more the fact that where many people are bound by obligations they will probably be observed by none. Then, obviously, the person who undertakes to safeguard the future religious life of the child must be someone who believes in the Catholic religion.

How absurd, on the face of it, to suppose that a Protestant or an apostate or a schismatic is a suitable person to safeguard a Catholic child's religion. The presence of a non-Catholic may be welcomed as a witness, or a well-wisher, or as anything you please except sponsor. For that office he is *incapax*, and if, through a misunderstanding or an error, he goes through the ceremony, the action is invalid, no responsibilities are incurred, and no spiritual relationship arises. And yet, sometimes non-Catholics, for one reason or another, are most anxious to act as godparents to the children of Catholics; and there may be good reasons for not altogether thwarting their desires. Sponsors they cannot be. But there appears no convincing reason why they should not be allowed to figure at the ceremony as witnesses merely. This plan might save them the mortification of blank refusal, when there is good reason for sparing them pain. In order to leave no room

for doubt who is really the sponsor, the Church requires that he should physically touch the infant at the moment of baptism or receive it immediately afterwards from the hands of the minister.

#### MAY A CATHOLIC SPONSOR AT NON-CATHOLIC BAPTISM?

The question might arise whether a Catholic may stand as sponsor to a child who is being baptized by a Protestant minister. It is certain that an infant who is validly baptized is a member of the Catholic Church until, having reached the age of puberty, it incurs excommunication by open adherence to a Protestant sect. May we therefore conclude that a Catholic may stand as sponsor with the intention of rigorously keeping his promises and seeing to it that the child is brought up a Catholic?

The answer to the above question must be a decided negative for two reasons. It would involve a serious breach of good faith and a conscious deception of the Protestant minister. The degree of responsibility undertaken by the sponsor depends on the degree of his religious education, but an Anglican minister, for example, putting the questions contained in the Prayer Book, certainly does so under the impression that the sponsor is undertaking to educate the child in the Anglican Church. He exhorts him to bring the child to sermons and see that he is confirmed and learns the Church Catechism, etc. For a Catholic to answer these questions in a sense foreign to the meaning of the interrogation is plainly contrary to natural morality. Still more, it is forbidden, because a sponsor takes an *active* part in the service.

The Church tolerates a *passive* assistance at non-Catholic funerals, weddings, etc., for social reasons, provided there is a grave cause and no danger of perversion or scandal. The presence of a Catholic *as sponsor* at a non-Catholic baptism could never be allowed

even for the gravest cause, because he would take an active share in the rite.

The sponsor has a grave obligation with regard to the future religious education of the child. It is necessary to stress this point as the fact is too often forgotten or neglected. It is perfectly true that in a large number of cases the obligation does not arise, because the parents are good practising Catholics and it is their duty in the first place to bring up their children in the Catholic religion; but it is also equally true that in certain instances the parents are lax and negligent, and, by sending their children to non-Catholic schools, expose them to the risk of losing the Faith. Here is the opportunity for the godparent who appreciates his office and understands its obligations. In law, of course, these obligations are not recognized, and the child's religion is absolutely under the control of the parents; but moral influence can be made strong and effective. The sponsor is very often a member of the family, or at least a close friend, and much can be done by kindly, yet insistent, intervention. His or her action is not an undue interference with parental rights: on the contrary, the sponsor is only exercising a solemn duty before God and an obligation of justice towards the Church.

In another way also can the care of the sponsor be most efficacious. The period which is most important in a child's religious growth, and when a great number of defections occur, is the time immediately following his leaving school. The problem engages the attention of every priest responsible for the care of souls, and a great deal has been done to meet it by establishing parochial clubs and other schemes for the benefit of youth. But everyone admits that these organizations very often just fail in their purpose because the very children who need their influence most either cannot or will not join. It is a physical impossibility for the

priest of the place to have a constant and individual care for each boy and girl who leaves his school. The work must be undertaken by lay people, and the person who is primarily responsible is the parent, and, failing the parent, the sponsor.

If only the obligation were sufficiently recognized and understood by all it is evident that untold good would result. But the obligation is not understood, and it is the object of these words to make it so. It is a troublesome and irksome task even for a devout and religious person to pursue a negligent youth and point out the necessity of going to Mass on Sunday and receiving the Sacraments occasionally, but who can doubt that it is more pleasing in the sight of God and redounds greater to His Glory than much time spent in many prayers and religious exercises?—for these are not of obligation, but the duties of a sponsor are. It is difficult to bring home to our conscience sins of omission, especially when the duties we omit are not universally recognized.

It may appear to some that the point has been too strongly pressed. One willingly admits that the obligations in too many cases are neither understood nor recognized, but it is just for this reason, and because of the spiritual harm resulting, that it has appeared necessary to stress the point emphasized so strongly by the Church that the office of sponsor is not an empty ceremony, but carries with it serious and grave obligations—"It is the duty of godparents, arising from their office, to regard their spiritual children as a perpetual charge, and to instruct them carefully in the obligations of the Christian life, in order that they prove themselves such as they solemnly promised to be."

#### WHOLESALE SPONSORSHIP

In some parish or other a priest's housekeeper, or a particular lady of the congregation, stands as god-mother in Baptism to any number of poor children. Her

charitable zeal deserves praise, and such readiness to oblige in this way is, no doubt, a decided convenience. But is there not some rashness here?

The canons expressly direct that in Confirmation a sponsor should not stand for more than two children, and there is no doubt that the rule applies even more strongly to Baptism. I am not presuming to speak in absolute condemnation of the proceeding. Yet, seeing that the responsibility thus incurred is *real and grave*, it seems necessary to counsel *moderation and caution* in assuming the same. At least, it appears imprudent for any one person to assemble a numerous family of godchildren without knowing whether the parents are well or ill disposed towards the practice of their religion. For it is to be borne in mind that when the parents (who are, of course, *primarily* responsible) neglect their duty towards the souls of their children, the office of sponsor at once ceases to be a sinecure, and calls for action. And so it can hardly be conscientious to saddle oneself with more duties of this kind than one can reasonably expect to satisfy.

And yet very few godparents, probably, take their position seriously. They enter upon the office heedlessly, and they just as readily forget its duties. Indeed, most godparents would resent their godchildren making any claim upon them because of this relationship. It would be a piece of gross impertinence in their opinion. In my experience as a confessor, I think that I have never had anyone to accuse himself of neglecting his duties as a godparent. And I had one midwife in a large city inform me that she was the happy godmother to 965 children. Evidently her duties sat lightly upon her.

## Some Things New and Old

### BIBLE VERSIONS

*Why is it that the Catholic Church, until the Reformation, did not allow the laity to read the Bible?*

The Church never forbade the laity to read the Bible. This fantastic story that the reading of the Bible was unknown until the Reformation is an absurd propaganda yarn. The root of that story is that until the invention of printing books of any kind were few. One of the first books widely circulated by the early printers was a Catholic version of the Bible.

Saint Jerome's Latin version of the Bible, the Vulgate, dates back to the fourth century. In England there were various translations of the Bible into the vernacular as far back as Anglo-Saxon times: the translation of Caedmon (670); Saint Bede the Venerable (735); King Alfred the Great (801). These are but three out of the many vernacular versions. And it is apparent that as the English language changed, so there were many vernacular versions of the Bible prepared for the laity. And always there was the Latin version, which was available to every scholar, for Latin was more widely understood than it is today.

Between the year 1445, when printing was invented, and 1500, no fewer than fifteen Catholic versions of the Bible were printed in German. Canisius College, at Buffalo, has a complete German Bible that was printed in 1483—and that was the year when Luther was born, so he cannot be credited with producing the first Bible in German!

Before the year 1500 there had been thirteen Catholic versions of the Bible in Italian, eleven in French, two in Bohemian, one in Dutch and one in Spanish—not to mention the 134 versions of the Bible in Latin that had been produced.



## CARDINAL MANNING AND CAPITALISM

*Why did Cardinal Manning condemn Capitalism?*

Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, who was often called the workingman's friend because of his great work in behalf of the English laboring classes, did not condemn Capitalism. What he condemned was its abuse. This is what Cardinal Manning said:

"What is a capitalist? Certainly the Capitalism of our day calls for drastic reforming. I do not say abolition. Any property owner may be justly termed a capitalist, such as the village blacksmith with his modest plant of anvil and irons, or the master chimney sweep, whose brushes and ladders are necessary to the labor of his subordinates. Capitalism is not radically wrong, despite the harm and havoc that we see as the bitter fruit of the Industrial Capitalism of our day. The Seventh Commandment safeguards the right to own property. It does not give a charter to any property owner to grow rich to a fabulous degree at the expense of the defrauded labor of virtual slaves. Capitalism, as we know it, cries to Heaven for reform, and to earth for review, and when it has been reformed and reviewed, its best facet of reform will be an adequate paying out to wage earners of the over-plus of profit which they have created."

The late Monsignor Cuthbert Hedley, O.S.B., Bishop of Newport in Wales, declared that Pope Leo XIII was influenced by Cardinal Manning when he wrote his famous Encyclical on the condition of the working class, *Rerum Novarum*.

Replying to the question as to whether any industry could not afford a living wage to its employes, the Cardinal said:

"That objection does not impress me. The industry could not be pursued without the help of the workers, and therefore the workers should share in the profits,

even before what is paid out to stockholders, or to the government in taxation."

### CHAINED BIBLES

*If the Catholic Church, as you say, has always encouraged the Faithful to read the Bible, why were the Bibles so often chained to desks in the churches?*

That, if you have the faintest notion of history, proves the Catholic contention entirely. Because the reason that the Bibles were chained was that the Church not only desired the Sacred Scriptures to be read by everyone frequenting the churches, but desired equally that these Bibles should not be stolen.

It was not until the year 1445 that the first book was printed, so no one could go out and buy a Bible or Testament for twenty-five cents or so. Every book had to be carefully and painstakingly written by hand, most of them elaborately illuminated along the margins with gayly colored capitals at the heading of chapters.

Thus a Bible, or any other book for that matter, was a treasure of great value and something rare besides. There is a record of a copyist who spent six years and three months making a copy of the Bible. In another record it is said that in Spain a Bible was copied in the incredibly short time of six months.

Hence it followed that in those days before printing made books widely available, a copy of the Bible was something greatly to be treasured. So the chained Bibles prove beyond doubt that the Church encouraged the free reading of Sacred Scripture by the laity, and that these Bibles were so highly esteemed that every care was taken so that the few and rare copies should not be mutilated or stolen.